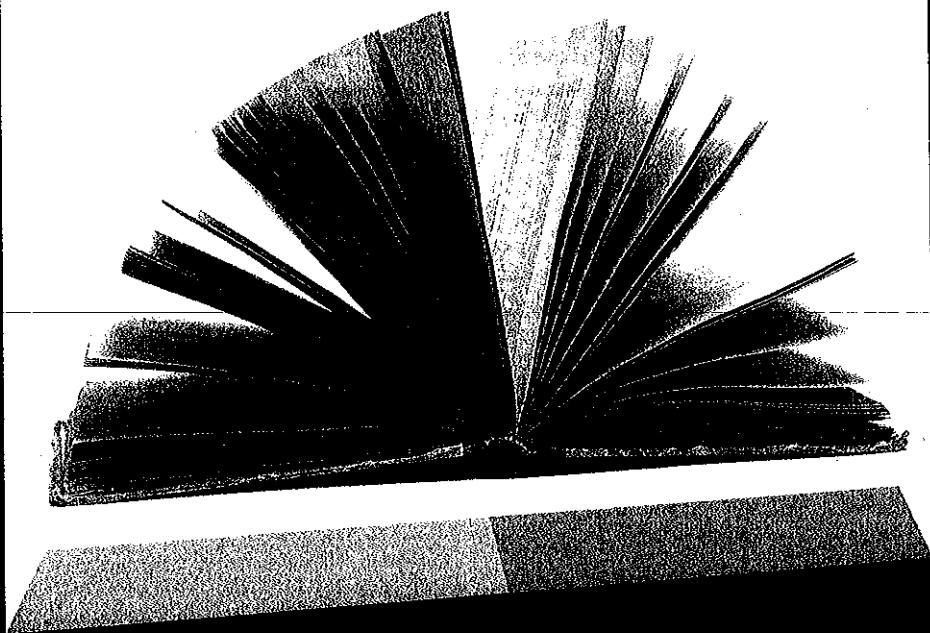


Look & Learning

10:00 AM

An Ebook Update—



by Victor Rivero

Ebook Update The Latest Sources, Resources, and Options An Ebook Update

The Latest Sources, Resources, and Options

What happens to learning when we move from the stable infrastructure of the 20th century to the fluid infrastructure of the 21st century, where technology is constantly creating and responding to change? In the opening pages of his 2011 book, *A New Culture of Learning: Cultivating the Imagination for a World of Constant Change*, John Seely Brown, former chief scientist of Xerox Corp. and past director of the famed Palo Alto Research Center (PARC), asks exactly that.

The answer, he says, is surprisingly simple. The result is, of course, a new culture of learning that *requires a shift in our thinking about education*. There is much more to it than that—he continued writing the rest of the book, after all—but “a growing digital, networked infrastructure” that is “amplifying our ability to access and use nearly unlimited resources and incredible instruments while connecting with one another at the same time” is not a point that he misses.



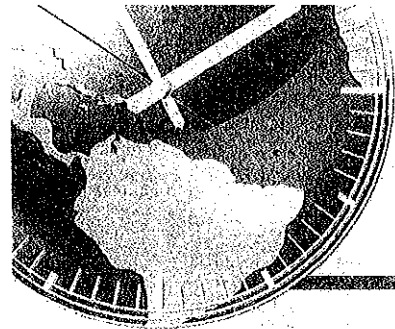
Among those “incredible instruments”—apart from social media and even social learning platforms such as Edmodo—are ebooks. The percentage of U.S. adults with an ebook reader doubled from 6% to 12% between November 2010 and May 2011, according to a survey published by the Pew Internet & American Life Project. In May 2011, Amazon announced that ebook sales now exceed all of its printed book sales. In 2010, *Internet@Schools* published a widely read article, “E Is for Explosion: E-Readers, Etextbooks, Econtent, Elearning, E-Everything” which highlighted more than a dozen solution providers in the area of ebooks, etextbooks, and other digital content for academic use. I will revisit some of those in this article. I’ve also added to the list, but the bottom line is that this year, the explosion continues!

Discovery Education: This king of the content companies con-



tinues to offer entire states an alternative to basal textbooks with solutions such as Science Techbook, a new primary instructional resource for elementary and middle schools. Built from scratch to address state and Core Standards, it’s a dynamic, interactive

>



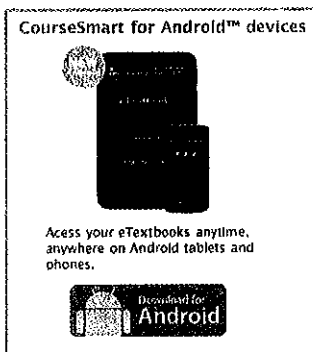
The percentage of U.S. adults with an ebook reader doubled from 6% to 12% between November 2010 and May 2011, according to a survey published by the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

collection of resources that includes customized professional development for teachers. With up-to-date content and real-time feedback, traditional textbooks don't stand a chance when it comes to presenting data to a student in its most interesting format. Factoring in basal costs and cash-strapped school districts, expect more districts and states to discover Discovery Education solutions. www.discoveryeducation.com

Shmoop: Since I last wrote about it, this "not your father's Cliffs-Notes" site transitioned from beta to gamma. Beta, of course, denotes a sort of test state before the real thing is released, but it has kept it real all along, and now Shmoop is pushing a love for learning beyond its site more than ever with ebooks and apps for the iPhone, iPod touch, iPad, Barnes & Noble NOOK, Amazon Kindle, and Sony Reader. It will continue to dominate with sound management, solid literary-helper content, and great writers. www.shmoop.com



CourseSmart: This website really is helpful. It carries more than 90% of all college textbooks in use today as etextbooks. A place where students can get digital course materials for nearly any course, it has one of the largest selections of etextbooks as it partners with the largest and most specialized publishers in higher education. Students don't necessarily even need an e-reader—as of April 2011, there's CourseSmart for Android. It provides course materials onto student computers or supported handheld devices in 5 minutes flat—and yes, someone timed it. www.coursesmart.com



Pearson eCollege: I didn't mention it before, but it certainly deserves a mention. Now, Pearson eCollege has partnered with CourseSmart to provide more than 20,000 etextbooks and other digital materials through a single sign-on through Pearson LearningStudio, an online learning platform for content, communication, and collaboration inside and outside the classroom. www.ecollege.com



Follett's CafeScribe: By the time you read this, the new CafeScribe will already be available. It will have an easier user interface and navigation, improved note taking and sharing, more powerful search and summary tools—and perhaps

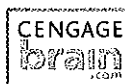


most importantly—the new CafeScribe is mobile-friendly. This will give students the ability to read textbooks on any tablet or smartphone with a web browser. This is part of a larger trend, where content pushed to mobile devices is no longer an afterthought but the main course. This is quickly becoming the next chapter in digital textbooks. www.cafescribe.com

Zinio: The "world's largest newsstand and bookstore" offers content for purchase on any screen—Android phones included. It offers easy movement within reading platforms offering text, interactive graphics, animated illustrations, videos, and more. With hundreds of thousands of titles, it's been quite a decade for this 2001-founded, San Francisco-based company. Now, partnering with Recorded Books (one of the largest audiobook producers in the world), Zinio announced in June that it will begin digital distribution to public libraries. www.zinio.com/books



CengageBrain: It's not just ebooks, but e-chapters that you'll need to watch out for. Sure, CengageBrain is now offering a new ebook reader device as it partners with CourseSmart to offer more than 15,000 new print textbooks, textbook rentals, and ebooks, but it also offers the freedom to purchase a-la-carte style, making bite-sized e-chapters accessible via desktop, laptop, iPad, iPhone, or Android device. www.cengagebrain.com



Taylor & Francis: This venerable academic publisher now offers libraries 18 eCollections in key subject areas by annual subscription or outright purchase to enhance a library's electronic offerings. This is in addition to its 100 best-selling ebook offerings and 17 highly specialized eFocus collections. www.taylorandfrancis.com



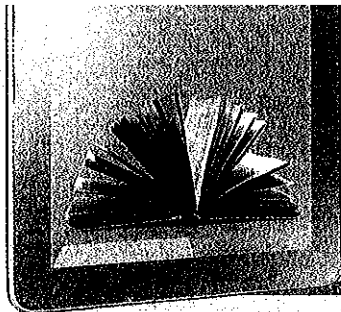
eCampus: Easy, fast, and cheap textbooks aren't all this firm offers. Students save 50% when they purchase one of more than 100,000 ebooks and etextbooks available in the massive eCampus catalog, either through an online version or an offline viewing version. www.ecampus.com



OverDrive: Following a series of meetings with the Ohio Metro Library Directors, this company announced a series of platform enhancements at the American Library Association (ALA) conference in June 2011 that have to do with meeting demand for ebooks from libraries. Streamlined steps for customers to discover and borrow ebooks on various devices and platforms will offer Kindle Library Lending support in addition to every major operating system, reading device, and mobile platform. www.overdrive.com



Ebook Update The Latest Sources, Resources, and Options An Ebook Update



Gutenberg himself might also do well to download
A New Culture of Learning, Kindle Edition.
 It's cheaper than the paperback,
 and he'd learn quite a bit.

Copia: In beta but going strong, this company offers built-in social features to make reading and studying a shared experience in discussions between professors and classmates—all centered on books they love as well as required reading. With note writing and highlighting, students can discuss their books online while they read them. www.thecopia.com



Complete Curriculum: For less than \$30 per year, this publisher of K–12 digital texts and engaging, web-based instructional materials offers an entire academic year's textbook content and activities. Each text is divided into 180 daily lessons or 1.5 hours of daily classroom instruction. Developed by teachers, academics, and editors, offering downloads of digital K–12 textbooks is its specialty. www.completecurriculum.com



HMH Fuse: Not to be left out of the Great Mobile Migration, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt has introduced what it calls "the world's first educational app for schools developed exclusively for a touchscreen mobile device." Combining direct instruction, ongoing support, assessment, and intervention for greater personalized instruction, it created the first algebra class taught on an iPad and is currently conducting a pilot program to compare Fuse to a traditional textbook in areas such as student achievement and student attitudes about learning. Fuse looks like a sure winner. <http://hmheducation.com/fuse>



myON Reader: This personalized literacy environment provides more than 1,000 enhanced digital books including reading supports based on grade levels. Through Capstone titles, myON books have the same design as their printed counterparts but also include audio highlighting and a dictionary to assist the reader. With myGrowth, an accurate real-time measure of what students read and how long it takes them to read is possible. End-of-book quizzes and a progress dashboard further enhance the experience. www.myon.com



Sapling Learning: Providing online homework and etextbooks, this clean-cut site offers up some excellent options for students looking to dive into STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subject areas. It's worth a good look. www.saplinglearning.com



NetLibrary: Offering a way to manage and deliver quality content despite ever-changing formats, languages,



and technologies, this versatile econtent provider for libraries and publishers supports the most content, the most media types, and a wide audience of users and platforms. <http://company.netlibrary.com>

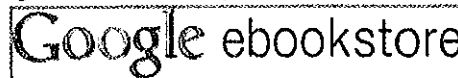
ebrary: ebrary offers libraries a variety of models for acquiring ebooks from leading publishers, whether it's through subscriptions, purchase, patron-driven acquisitions, short-term loans, or other methods. ebrary's academic database recently surpassed 70,000 titles. www.ebrary.com



MylLibrary: A leading econtent aggregation platform for public, academic, and professional libraries, MyLibrary offers the ability to acquire and access digital content by title, publisher, or subject collection basis. There are nearly 250,000 titles available covering all major disciplines, and 5,000 new titles are added every month. It works with *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Taylor & Francis, McGraw-Hill, Wiley, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Springer Publishing, and Elsevier, among others. www.mylibrary.com



Google ebookstore: With nearly 3 million free ebooks and hundreds of thousands more for purchase—and available on just about any device, including laptop, Android, iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, the web, NOOK, and Sony Reader—this is quite possibly the world's largest selection of ebooks. It's also one of the easiest to use for a couple of reasons: Not only does it push out to nearly any device, it also picks up from where you left off should you switch devices during the day. <http://books.google.com/ebooks>



Project Gutenberg: This non-profit just marked what it recognizes as the 40th anniversary of the invention of the ebook on July 4, 1971. The site offers more than 36,000 free ebooks downloadable through PC, Kindle, iPad, iPhone, Android, or other portable devices. With more than 100,000 free ebooks available through its partners, affiliates, and resources, the "first producer of free ebooks" is included here, last but not least.



If Gutenberg himself some 5 centuries later were to be awakened from the dead and have a look around, he might be perplexed or even mystified by what he sees—but he might also do well to download *A New Culture of Learning*, Kindle Edition. It's cheaper than the paperback, and he'd learn quite a bit. www.gutenberg.org

Contact Victor at victor@VictorRivero.com.

The Latest Sources, Resources, and Options An Ebook Update The Latest Sources